

## Fact Sheet:

# Nursing Facilities

*This **Fact Sheet** provides an overview of Nursing Facilities and their services.*

### What is a Nursing Facility?

A nursing facility (NF), or nursing home, provides 24-hour supervised nursing care, personal care, therapy, nutrition management, organized activities, social services, room, board, and laundry.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Aging and Disability Services Administration (ADSA) licenses nursing facilities. NFs are inspected to ensure that they meet minimum care and safety requirements specified in law and rule.

### Surveys

Facility licensing/certification surveys are one of numerous quality assurance activities that occur in NFs. On average, nursing facilities are surveyed annually. The on-site survey includes observation of resident activities and care, resident interviews, and review of resident records. ADSA also employs Quality Assurance Nurses, registered nurses who visit NFs, conduct utilization review, and provide regulation-based technical assistance to maximize resident care quality.

### Staff Training

The nursing facility must ensure that each Nursing Assistant (NA) has completed or is a student in a DSHS-approved NA training program. The NA must complete the training program within four months of hire. The NA must complete a minimum of 16 hours of approved training before any direct contact with residents.

### Protecting Nursing Facility Residents

All NF staff are required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect of a resident. Specially trained ADSA employees investigate complaints. If a report is substantiated, DSHS may take enforcement action, ranging from imposing a civil fine to revocation of the license to referral for investigation of criminal charges.

*Residents, families and citizens are encouraged to call if they suspect abuse or neglect of a NF resident. The toll-free number for reporting these concerns is **1-800-562-6078**.*

### Resident Rights

NF residents have the right to exercise reasonable control over life decisions in a safe, clean, comfortable, and homelike environment. They have a right to choice, participation, privacy, and the opportunity to engage in religious, political, civic, recreational, and other social activities that foster self-worth and enhance quality of life.

### Comparison of Nursing Facilities

*It's important to thoroughly examine a facility's options to assure it is right for your needs.*

Nursing facilities can be compared in a variety of ways, including the quality of care provided. One comparison tool is available at [www.Medicare.gov/NHcompare/home.asp](http://www.Medicare.gov/NHcompare/home.asp) on the national Medicare website. This tool enables you to sort your search by geography, proximity, or facility name and view information reported by each nursing facility, as well as state inspection results.

The most recent full survey report and any subsequent complaint investigation reports are also available for review in each NF. Those considering placement in any facility are always encouraged to visit the facility, meet the staff, and ask any questions necessary to assist in reaching a placement decision.

### Paying for Care in a Nursing Facility

*Medicaid pays for the care of approximately 12,400 nursing facility residents.*

For people with limited income and resources, **Medicaid** uses both state and federal money to help pay for nursing facility care. The state bases payment rates on the care needs of the individual. **Medicare** pays for a minimal amount of nursing facility care. People who are veterans or related to veterans may qualify to have care paid for through the **Veterans Administration**.

Each facility determines the amount they will charge private pay residents. Private pay amounts will differ.

*There are approximately 250 nursing facilities in Washington State.*

### Nursing Facility Resources

These organizations are involved in NF industry-related advocacy and legislative activities.

Visit us online at  
[www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov](http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov)

#### Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

1-800-562-6028 or [www.LTCOP.org](http://www.LTCOP.org)

#### Washington Association of Homes and Services for the Aging

1570 Wilmington Drive, Suite 220  
Dupont, Washington 98327  
(253) 964-8876

#### Washington Health Care Association

303 Cleveland Avenue S.E., Suite 206  
Tumwater, Washington 98501

#### Washington Pioneer Network

#### Resident Councils of Washington

220 East Canyon View Road  
Belfair, WA 98528-9597  
360/275-8000